

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 142

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to name that portion of US Highway 41A from the Kentucky state line to its intersection with US Highway 41 in Nashville and from the intersection of US Highways 41A and 41 in Nashville south along US Highway 41 to the Georgia state line the "Purple Heart Trail" in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly, along with the citizens of Tennessee and of this nation, are intensely proud of those brave men and women who have served their country in times of armed conflict in defense of our liberty and ways of life; all Americans are eternally grateful for and appreciative of the sacrifices made by those citizen soldiers who have sometimes suffered injury or death at the hands of our foes; and

WHEREAS, General George Washington, Commander of the Continental Army, conceiving a need for a military decoration, which would be available to the common soldier for outstanding valor and merit, instituted by General Orders of August 7, 1782, the Badge of Military Merit; it was designed as a heart made of purple cloth or silk edged with narrow lace or binding to be worn on the left breast; and

WHEREAS, General Washington's orders were lost or misfiled for almost 150 years until a search in preparation of the celebration of his bicentennial brought them to light again; on February 22, 1932, the War Department revived the Purple Heart decoration as a bronze metal heart, plated with gold and enameled with various colors, with a bust of Washington in the center, surmounted with the Washington coat-of-arms, suspended from a purple and white ribbon; and

WHEREAS, the Purple Heart is awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of an enemy, and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action; Purple Hearts have been awarded for action in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, and up to and including more recent conflicts at the end of the last century and the beginning of this century; and

WHEREAS, in its national convention, the delegates of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Inc., the only congressionally chartered veterans organization exclusively for combat wounded, approved a resolution to promote the establishment of a symbolic Purple Heart Trail in each of the fifty states. The convention was inspired by the action of the George Washington Chapter #1732 of Fredricksburg/Spotsylvania, which in 1992 erected a marker for the start of a Purple Heart Trail at Mt. Vernon and, in 1996 and 1998, persuaded the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia to extend the trail connecting Mt. Vernon, Washington's birthplace, his boyhood home, and down I-95 and I-64 to General Douglas McArthur's tomb in Norfolk; and

WHEREAS, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Department of Tennessee's Purple Heart Trail Committee has proposed that this State join in commemorating the sacrifices of those Tennesseans and other Americans who have suffered wounds or death at the hands of our enemies during wartime combat; and

WHEREAS, the primary highway used in troop movements in Tennessee, especially during World War II, was US Highway 41 from Nashville to the Georgia state line and US

Highway 41A from Nashville to the Kentucky state line adjacent to Fort Campbell; the Nashville Union railroad station was a gathering point, with troops moving south on Highway 41 to Camp Forrest (now the site of the US Airforce Arnold Engineering Development Center) and Forts McPherson, Gordon, and Benning in Georgia, and north on Highway 41A to the rail hub at Fort Campbell; and

WHEREAS, throughout the years, Tennesseans have been inspired by those who have earned the Purple Heart to renewed confidence, loyalty, and support for the US Armed Forces; their combat wounds remind us of their great valor and unshaken commitment to the preservation of this nation, its liberty, and its way of life; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are profoundly appreciative of the selfless sacrifice made by countless sons and daughters of Tennessee who have served their nation in the United States Armed Forces, especially those who have received combat wounds, some of which resulted in death, who were awarded Purple Hearts; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly most heartily concurs with the excellent proposal of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Department of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that that portion of US Highway 41A from the Kentucky state line to its intersection with US Highway 41 in Nashville and the portion of US Highway 41 from its intersection with US Highway 41A in Nashville south to the Georgia state line be named the "Purple Heart Trail" in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating such segments of US Highways 41A and 41 as the "Purple Heart Trail" in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall become operative only if the Federal Highway Administrator advises the Commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this resolution shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation.